

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4355

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 5390

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP SA SO

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SOMALI PRESIDENT TO SAUDI ARABIA

REF: JIDDA 3197

1. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR ANY US BRIEFING OF THE SAUDIS REGARDING A FORTHCOMING TRIP TO SOMALIA BY A SAUDI DELEGATION TO INCLUDE REMARKS REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN HOSTILITIES LATER THIS YEAR.

2. THE EPMG HAS BEEN SAYING EVER SINCE LAST SUMMER THAT IT IS VERY MUCH CONCERNED BY THE POSSIBILITY OF AGGRESSIVE SOMALI ACTION AGAINST ETHIOPIA BY MID-1975 OR LATER. ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS HAVE EXPLAINED THIS TIMEFRAME ON THE GROUNDS THAT MUCH OF THE TRAINING WHICH THE SOMALIS NEED ON SOPHISTICATED SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT WILL BE COMPLETED BY THIS TIME AND THAT PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE WILL NO LONGER BE INHIBITED BY HIS PRESIDENCY OF THE OAU. WE BELIEVE THE SAUDIS ARE INTERESTED IN AVOIDING A SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN CONFLICT, PARTICULARLY SINCE SUCH A CONFLICT WOULD LIKELY INCREASE FURTHER SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SOMALIA. WE WOULD THEREFORE HOPE THAT THE SAUDI DELEGATION GOING TO SOMALIA WOULD BE WILLING TO EXPRESS SAUDI CONCERN REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE HOSTILITIES BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIS AND URGE THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT TO AVOID ANY AGGRESSIVE ACTION AGAINST ETHIOPIA. IT MIGHT BE WILLING TO POINT OUT THAT AN OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA WOULD INVOLVE THE FOLLOWING

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UNDESIRABLE CONSEQUENCES: A) AN ADDITIONAL STRAIN ON RELATIONS

BETWEEN ARAB AND BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES; B) AN INCREASED DANGER OF DEEPER INVOLVEMENT IN THE AREA OF THE US AND THE USSR; AND C) CONSIDERABLE DANGER, AT LEAST IN THE LONG RUN, TO THE SECURITY AND PRESENT TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF SOMALIA.
HUMMEL

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